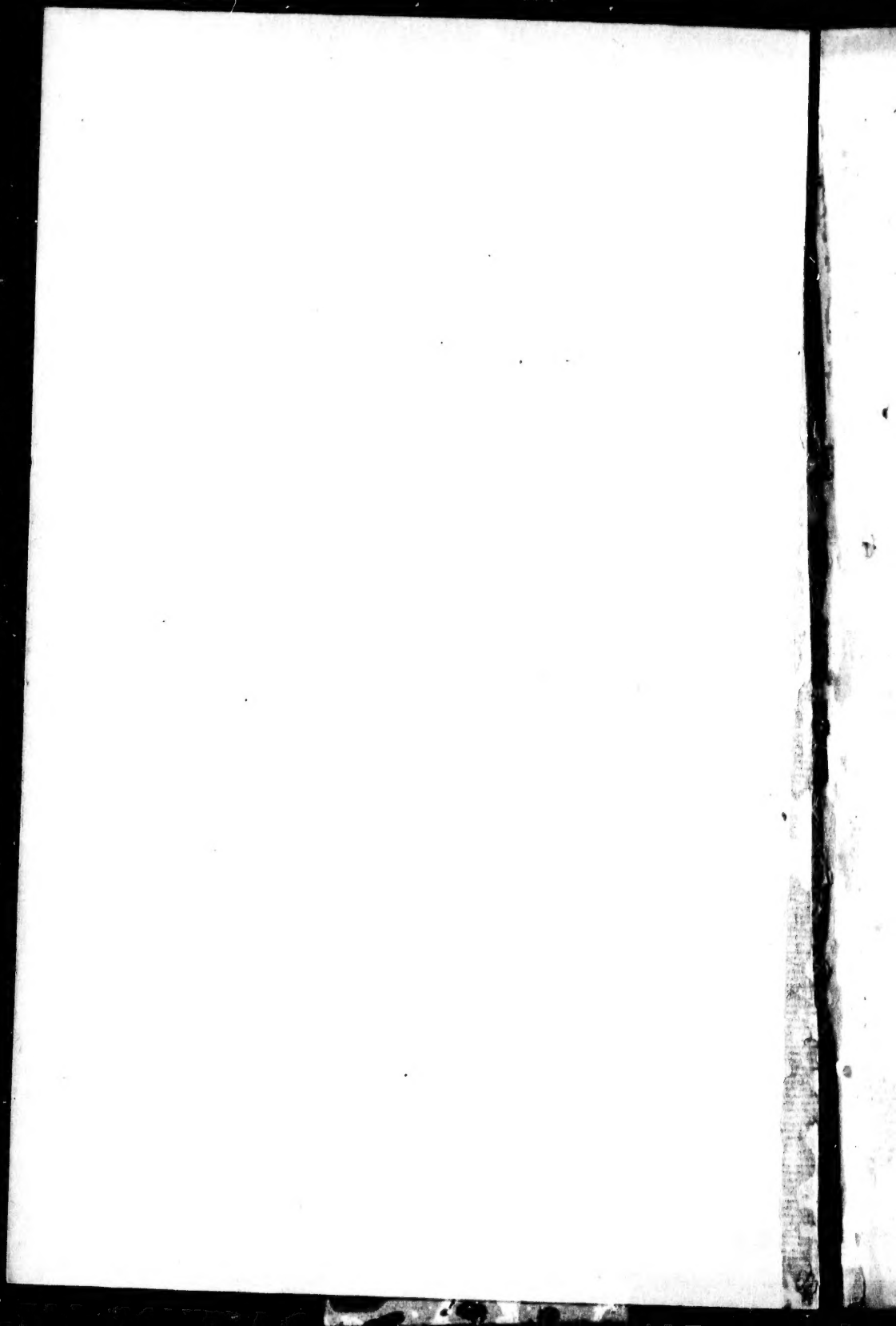




AUTHENTIC PAPERS
FROM
A M E R I C A:
SUBMITTED TO THE
DISPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION
OF THE
P U B L I C.

L O N D O N:

Printed for T. BECKET, the Corner of the Adelphi
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E R R A T A.

Page 1. line 13. for remidable, read, *remediable*.

18. dele, *develloped*.

To the PUBLISHER.

THE publick should receive the fullest degree of information on the dispute between Great Britain and her Colonies. I am not an indifferent, though I profess to be an impartial, observer of the measures and opinions now agitated: And, therefore, I send you the inclosed papers, which may afford seasonable instruction. If you will print them as I have placed them, they may more readily shew the extent and importance of the question, to those who seem to consider it only as a local effect from the late Acts of Parliament, remediable by repealing them. I do not obtrude any opinion of my own, or draw any comparison from these papers, as the latent seed and quick growth of the principles and designs cultivated in them, are developed in characters so legible, that he who runs may read.

I am, Sir,

your most humble servant,

London,
Jan. 10, 1775.

IMPARTIAL..

B

To

To the KING's Most Excellent MAJESTY.

The Petition of the *Freeholders and other Inhabitants* of the Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, &c. &c. &c.

MOST HUMBLY SHEWETH,

THAT the inhabitants of these colonies, unanimously devoted with the warmest sentiments of duty and affection to your Majesty's sacred person and government, inviolably attached to the present happy establishment of the protestant succession in your illustrious house, and deeply sensible of your royal attention to their prosperity and happiness, humbly beg leave to approach the throne by representing to your Majesty, That these colonies were originally planted by subjects of the British crown; who, animated with the spirit of liberty, encouraged by your Majesty's royal predecessors, and confiding in the publick faith, for the enjoyment of all the rights and liberties essential to freedom, emigrated from their native country to this continent, and by their successful perseverance in the midst of innumerable dangers and difficulties, together with a profusion of their blood and treasure, have happily added these vast and valuable dominions to the empire of Great Britain.

That for the enjoyment of these rights and liberties, several governments were early formed in the said colonies with full power of legislation, agreeable to the principles of the English constitution.

That

To the KING's Most Excellent MAJESTY.

The Petition of the *General Congress*, held at Philadelphia in November last.

MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN!

WE your Majesty's faithful subjects of the colonies of North America, &c. in behalf of ourselves and the inhabitants of *those colonies, who have deputed us to represent them in general congress* by this our humble petition beg leave to lay our grievances before the throne.

A standing army has been kept in these colonies ever since the conclusion of the late war, without the consent of our assemblies; and this army, with a considerable naval armament has been employed to enforce the collection of taxes.

The authority of the commander in chief, and under him of the brigadier general, has in time of peace been rendered supreme in all the civil governments in America.

The commander in chief of all your Majesty's forces in North America, has in time of peace, been appointed governor of a colony. The charges of usual offices have been greatly encreased, and new expensive and oppressive offices have been multiplied.

The

That under those governments these liberties thus vested in their ancestors, and transmitted to their posterity, have been exercised and enjoyed, and by the inestimable blessings thereof, under the favour of Almighty God, the inhospitable deserts of America have been converted into flourishing countries; science, humanity, and the knowledge of divine truths, diffused through remote regions of ignorance, infidelity and barbarism; the number of British subjects wonderfully increased, and the wealth and power of Great Britain proportionably augmented.

That by means of these settlements, and the unparalleled success of your Majesty's arms, a foundation is now laid for rendering the British empire the most extensive and powerful of any recorded in history. Our connections with this empire we esteem our greatest happiness and security, and humbly conceive it may now be so established by your royal wisdom, as to endure to the latest period of time. This, with most humble submission to your Majesty, we apprehend will be most effectually accomplished, by fixing the pillars thereof on liberty and justice, and securing the inherent rights and liberties of your subjects here upon the principles of the English constitution. To this constitution these two principles are essential, the right of your faithful subjects freely to grant to your Majesty such aids as are required for the support of your government over them, and other public exigencies, and trials by their peers; by the one they are secured from unreasonable impositions, and by the other from arbitrary decisions of the executive power. The continuation of these liberties to the inhabitants of America, we ardently implore as absolutely necessary, to unite the several parts of your wide extended dominions in that harmony so essential to the preservation and happiness of the whole. Protected in these liberties, the emoluments Great Britain receives from us, however great at present, are inconsiderable compared with those she has the fairest prospect of acquiring. By this protection she will for ever secure to herself the advantage of conveying to all Europe the merchandizes which America furnishes, and of supplying through the
same

The judges of admiralty and vice-admiralty courts are impowered to receive their salaries and fees from the effects condemned by themselves; the officers of the customs are impowered to break open and enter houses, without the authority of any civil magistrate, founded on legal information.

The judgers of courts of common law have been made entirely dependant on our part of the legislature for their salaries, as well as for the duration of their commissions. Councillors holding their commissions during pleasure, exercise legislative authority.

Humble and reasonable petitions from the representatives of the people have been fruitless.

The agents of the people have been discountenanced, and governors have been instructed to prevent the payment of their salaries: Assemblies have been repeatedly and injuriously dissolved: Commerce has been burthened with many useless and oppressive restrictions.

By several acts of parliament made in the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth years of your present Majesty's reign, duties are imposed on us for the purpose of raising a revenue, and the powers of admiralty, and vice-admiralty courts are extended beyond their ancient limits; whereby our property is taken from us without our consent, the tryal by jury in many civil cases is abolished, enormous forfeitures are incurred for slight offences, vexatious informers are exempted from paying damages, to which they are justly liable, and oppressive security is required from owners before they are allowed to defend their right.

Both houses of parliament have resolved that colonist may be tried in England for offences alledged to have been committed in America by virtue of statute, passed in the thirty-fifth year of Henry the eighth, and in consequence thereof, attempts have been made to enforce that statute. A statute was passed in the twelfth year of your Majesty's reign, directing that persons committing any offence therein

same channel whatever is wanted from thence: Here opens a boundless source of wealth, and naval strength; yet these immense advantages, by the abridgement of those invaluable rights and liberties, by which our growth has been nourished, are in danger of being for ever lost, and our subordinate legislators, in effect, rendered useless by the late Acts of Parliament, imposing duties and taxes on these colonies, and extending the jurisdiction of the courts of admiralty here, beyond its ancient limits; statutes by which your Majesty's commons in Britain undertake absolutely to dispose of the property of their fellow subjects in America, without their consent; for the enforcing whereof they are subjected to the determination of a single judge, in a court unrestrained by the wise rules of the common law, the birthright of Englishmen, and the safeguard of their persons and properties.

The invaluable right of taxing ourselves, and trial by our peers, of which we implore your Majesty's protection, are not, we most humbly conceive, unconstitutional, but confirmed by the great charter of English liberty. On the first of these rights the honourable the House of Commons found their practice of originating money-bills; a right enjoyed by the kingdom of Ireland, by the clergy of England, until relinquished by themselves; a right, in fine, which all other your Majesty's English subjects both within and without the realm have hitherto enjoyed.

With hearts, therefore, impressed with the most indelible characters of gratitude to your Majesty, and to the memory of the Kings of your most illustrious house, whose reigns have been signally distinguished by their auspicious influence on the prosperity of the British dominions, and convinced by the most affecting proofs of your Majesty's paternal love to all your people, however distant, and your unceasing and benevolent desires to promote their happiness: We most humbly beseech your Majesty, that you will be graciously pleased to take into your royal consideration, the distresses of your faithful subjects on this continent, *and to lay the same before your Majesty's*

therein described, in any place out of the realm, may be indicted and tried for the same in any shire or county within the realm; whereby the inhabitants of these colonies may in sundry cases, by that statute made capital, be deprived of a trial by their peers of the vicinage.

In the last sessions of Parliament an act was passed for blocking up the harbour of Boston, another, empowering the governor of Massachusetts Bay to send persons indicted for murder in that province, to another colony, or even to Great Britain for trial; whereby such offenders may escape legal punishment.—A third for altering the chartered constitution of government in that province; and a fourth for extending the limits of Quebec, abolishing the English and restoring the French laws, whereby great number of British freemen are subjected to the latter, and establishing an absolute government of the Roman Catholic religion throughout those vast regions that border on the westerly and northerly boundaries of the free Protestant English settlements; and a fifth, for the better providing suitable quarters for officers and soldiers in his Majesty's service in North America.

To a sovereign "who glories in the name of Briton," the bare recital of these Acts must, we presume, justify the loyal subjects who fly to the foot of his throne and implore his clemency for protection against them.

From this destructive system of colony-administration, adopted since the conclusion of the last war, have flowed these distresses, dangers, fears, and jealousies, that overwhelm your Majesty's dutiful colonies with afflictions; and we defy our most subtle and inveterate enemies to have the unhappy differences between Great Britain and these colonies from an earlier period, or from other causes than we have assigned. Had they proceeded, on our part, *from a restless levity of temper, unjust impulses of ambition, or artful suggestions of seditious persons*, we should merit the approbrious terms frequently bestowed upon us by those we revere. *

But

* Meaning the K--g.

8 *The Petition of the Americans in 1765.*

Majesty's Parliament; and to afford them such relief, as in your royal wisdom their unhappy circumstances shall be judged to require.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will pray.

New York, Nov. 1765.



To the Right Honourable the LORDS Spiritual
and Temporal, of Great Britain, in *Parliament*
assembled.

The Memorial of the Freeholders and other In-
habitants of the Massachusetts Bay, &c.

MOST HUMBLY SHEWS.

THAT his Majesty's liege subjects in his American colonies, though they *acknowledge a due subordination to that august body the British Parliament*, are intitled, in the opinion of your memorialists, to all the inherent rights and liberties of the natives of Great Britain, and have, ever since the settlement of the said colonies, exercised those rights and liberties, *as far as their local circumstances would permit.*

That your memorialists humbly conceive one of the most essential rights of these colonists, which they have ever, 'till lately, uninterruptedly enjoyed, to be trial by jury.

That your memorialists also humbly conceive, another of these essential rights to be the exemption from all taxes
but

But so far from promoting innovations, we have *only* opposed them; and can be charged with no offence, unless it be one to receive injuries and be sensible of them.

Had our creator been pleased to give us existence in a land of slavery, the sense of our condition might have been mitigated by ignorance and habit; but thanks to his adorable goodness, we were born the heirs of freedom, and ever enjoyed our right under the auspices of your royal ancestors, whose family was seated on the British throne, to rescue and secure a *pious* and gallant nation from the popery and despotism of a superstitious and inexorable tyrant.

Your Majesty, we are confident, justly rejoices, that your title to the crown, is thus founded on the title of your people to liberty; and therefore we doubt not, but your royal wisdom must approve the sensibility that teaches your subjects anxiously to guard the blessings they received *from divine providence*, and thereby to prove the performance of that *compact*, which elevated the illustrious house of Brunswick to the imperial dignity it now possesses.

The apprehension of being degraded into a state of servitude, from the pre-eminent cause of English freemen, while our minds retain the strongest love of liberty, and clearly foresee the miseries preparing for us and our posterity, excites emotions in our breasts, which though we cannot describe, we should not wish to conceal. Feeling as men, and thinking as subjects in the manner we do, silence would be disloyalty. By giving this faithful information *we do all in our power* to promote the great objects of your royal cares, the tranquility of your government and the welfare of your people.

Duty to your Majesty and regard for the preservation of ourselves and our posterity, the primary obligations of nature and of society, command us to intreat your royal attention; and as your Majesty enjoys the signal distinction of reigning over freemen, we apprehend the language of freemen cannot be displeasing.

C

Your

but such as are imposed on the people by the several legislatures in these colonies, which right they have, till of late, freely enjoyed. But your memorialists beg leave humbly to represent to your lordships, That the Act for granting stamp duties in the British colonies in America, &c. fills his Majesty's American subjects with the deepest concern: It tends to deprive them of the two fundamental and invaluable rights and liberties above-mentioned; and that several other late Acts of Parliament, which extend the jurisdiction and powers of the courts of admiralty, in the plantations, beyond their limits in Great Britain, thereby make an unnecessary and unhappy distinction, as to the modes of trial, between us and our fellow-subjects there, by whom we never have been excelled in duty and loyalty to our sovereign,

That from the *natural* connection between Great Britain and America, the *perpetual* continuance of which your memorialists most ardently desire; they conceive that nothing can conduce more to the interest of both, than the colonists free enjoyment of their rights and liberties, and an affectionate intercourse between Great Britain and them.

But your memorialists (not waving their claim to these rights, of which, with *the most becoming veneration and deference to the wisdom and justice of your Lordships*, they apprehend they cannot reasonably be deprived) humbly represent, that *from the peculiar circumstances of these colonies*, the duties imposed by the aforesaid Act, and several other late Acts of Parliament, are extremely greivous and burthensome, and the payment of the said duties will, very soon, for want of specie, become absolutely impracticable, and that the restrictions on trade by the said acts will not only greatly distress the colonies, but must be extremely detrimental to the trade and true interest of Great Britain.

Your memorialists, therefore, impressed with a just sense of the unfortunate circumstances of the colonies, and the impending destructive consequences which must necessarily ensue from the execution of these Acts, and
animated

Your royal indignation, we hope, will rather fall on those designing and dangerous men, who daringly interpose themselves between your royal person and your faithful subjects, and for several years past incessantly employed to dissolve the bands of society by abusing your Majesty's authority, misrepresenting your American subjects, and prosecuting the most desperate and irritating projects of opposition, have at length compelled us, by the force of accumulated injuries, *too severe to be any longer tolerable*, to disturb your Majesty's repose by our complaints.

These sentiments are extorted from hearts *that much more willingly* would bleed in your Majesty's service; yet so greatly have we been misrepresented that a necessity has been alledged of taking our property from us without our consent, "to defray the charge of the administration of justice, the support of civil government, and the defence, protection, and security of the colonies." But we beg leave to assure your Majesty, that such provision has been, and will be made for defraying the two first articles, *as has been and shall be judged by the legislatures of the several colonies*, just and suitable to their respective circumstances, and for the defence, protection, and security of the colonies, their militias, if properly regulated, *as they earnestly desire may immediately be done*, would be fully sufficient, at least in times of peace; and in case of war your faithful colonists will be ready and willing, as they ever have been, when constitutionally required to demonstrate their loyalty to your Majesty by exerting their most strenuous efforts in granting supplies and raising forces; yielding to no British subjects in affectionate attachment to your Majesty's person, family, and government: We too dearly prize the privilege of expressing that attachment by those proofs that are honourable to the prince who receives them, and to the people who gives them, *ever to resign it to any body of men upon earth*.

Had we been permitted to enjoy in quiet the inheritance left us by our fore-fathers, we should at this time have been peaceably, cheerfully, and usefully employed in recommending ourselves by every testimony of devotion to
your

animated with the warmest sentiments of filial affection for their mother country, most earnestly and humbly intreat, that your lordships will be pleased to bear their council in support of this memorial, and take the premises into your most serious consideration, and that your Lordships will also be thereupon pleased to pursue such measures for restoring the just rights and liberties of the colonies, and preserving them for ever inviolable, for redressing their present, and preventing future grievances, thereby promoting the united interests of Great Britain and America, as to your Lordships, in your great wisdom, shall seem most conducive and effectual to that important end.

And your memorialists will pray, &c.

New York, Nov. 1765.



To the Honourable the KNIGHTS, CITIZENS and BURGESSES of Great Britain, in *Parliament assembled.*

The Petition of his Majesty's dutiful and loyal Subjects the *Freeholders and other Inhabitants* of the Massachusett's Bay, &c. &c. &c.

MOST HUMBLY SHEWETH,

THAT the several late Acts of Parliament imposing divers duties and taxes on the colonies, and laying the trade and commerce thereof under very burthenome restrictions; but above all, the Act for granting and applying certain stamp duties, &c. in America, have filled them with the deepest concern and surprize, and they humbly conceive the execution of them, will be attended with
consequences

your Majesty, and of veneration to the state, from which we derive our origin. But though now exposed to unexpected and unnatural scenes of distress, by a contention with that nation, in whose parental guidance, on all important affairs, we have listened to with filial reverence constantly trusted, and therefore can derive *no instruction* in our present unhappy and perplexing circumstances from any former experience; yet we doubt not the purity of our intention and the integrity of our conduct will justify us at that *grand tribunal*, before which all mankind must submit to judgement.

We ask but for peace, liberty, and safety; we wish not a demunition of the prerogative, nor do we solicit the grant of any new right in our favour; your royal authority over us and *our connection with Great Britain* we shall always carefully and zealously endeavour to support and maintain.

Filled with sentiments of duty to your Majesty, and of *affection to our parent state*, and deeply impressed by our education, and strongly confirmed by our reason, and anxious to evince the sincerity of these dispositions—We present this petition only to obtain redress of grievances and relief from fears and jealousies, occasioned by the system of statutes and regulations, adopted since the close of the late war, for raising a revenue in America; extending the powers of courts of admiralty, trying persons in Great Britain for offences alledged to be committed in America, affecting the province of Massachusetts Bay, and altering the government and extending the limits of Quebec—By the abolition of which system the harmony between Great Britain and these colonies, so necessary to the happiness of both, and so ardently desired by the latter, *with the usual intercourse*, will be restored.

In the magnanimity and justice of your Majesty, and in the *Parliament* we confide for redress of our other grievances; *trusting* that when the causes of our apprehensions are removed, our future conduct will prove us not unworthy of the regard we have been accustomed in our happier days to enjoy. For appealing to that Being, who
searches

consequences very injurious to the commercial interest of Great Britain and her colonies, and must terminate in the eventual ruin of the latter. Your petitioners, therefore, most ardently implore the attention of the Honourable House, to the united and dutiful representation of their circumstances, and to their earnest supplications for relief from those regulations, that have already involved this continent in anxiety, confusion, and distress.

We most sincerely recognize our allegiance to the crown, and acknowledge all due subordination to the Parliament of Great Britain, and shall always retain the most grateful sense of their assistance and protection; it is from and under the English constitution, we derive all our civil and religious rights and liberties; we glory in being the subjects of the best of kings, and having been born under the most perfect form of government: But it is with most ineffable and humiliating sorrow, that we find ourselves, of late, deprived of the rights of granting our own property, for his Majesty's service, to which our lives and fortunes are intirely devoted, and to which, on his royal requisitions, we have ever been ready to contribute to the utmost of our ability.

We have also the misfortune to find, that all the penalties and forfeitures mentioned in the Stamp Act, and divers late Acts of trade, extending to the plantations, are, at the election of the informer, recoverable in any court of admiralty in America. This, as the newly erected court of admiralty has a general jurisdiction over all British America, renders his Majesty's subjects in these colonies liable to be carried at an immense expence, from one end of the continent to the other: It also gives us great pain to see a manifest distinction made therein, between the subjects of our mother country, and the colonies; in that the like penalties and forfeitures, recoverable there, only in his Majesty's courts of record, are made cognizable here by a court of admiralty. By this means we seem to be, in effect, unhappily deprived of two privileges essential to freedom, and which all Englishmen have ever considered as their best birth-rights, that of being free from all taxes, but such as they have consented

searches thoroughly the hearts of his creatures, we solemnly profess that *our councils have been influenced by no other motives than a dread of impending destruction.*

Permit us then,

MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN!

In the name of all your faithful people in America, with the utmost humility to implore you, for the honour of Almighty God, whose pure religion our enemies are undermining; for your glory, which can be advanced only by rendering your people happy and keeping them united; for the interests of your family, *dependant on an adherence to the principle that authorized it*; for the safety and welfare of your kingdoms and dominions, threatened with almost unavoidable dangers and distresses; that your Majesty, as the loving father of your whole people, connected by the same bands of law, loyalty, faith, and blood, though dwelling in various countries, will not suffer the transcendant relation form'd by these ties, to be further violated in uncertain expectation of effects, which, if attained, never can compensate *for the calamities through which they must be gained.*

We therefore most earnestly beseech your Majesty, that your royal authority and interposition may be used for our relief, and that a gracious answer may be given to this petition.

That your Majesty may enjoy every felicity through a long and glorious reign over loyal and happy subjects, and that your descendants may inherit your prosperity and dominions till time shall be no more, is, and always will be our sincere and fervent prayer.

Philadelphia, Nov. 1774.

To

consented to in person, or by their representatives, and of trial by their peers.

Your petitioners further shew, that *the remote situation*, and other circumstances of the colonies, render it impracticable that they *should be represented* but in their respective *subordinate legislatures*, and we humbly conceive that the Parliament, adhering strictly to the principles of the constitution, have never hitherto taxed any but those who were actually therein represented; for this reason, we humbly apprehend, they have never taxed Ireland, or any other of the subjects within the realm; but were it *ever so clear*, that the colonies might in law be reasonably deemed to be represented in the Honourable House of Commons; yet we conceive that very good reasons from *inconvenience*, from the principles of *true policy*, and from the *spirit of the British constitution*, may be adduced to shew that it would be for the *real interest of Great Britain*, as well as her colonies, that the late regulations should be rescinded; and the several Acts of Parliament imposing duties and taxes on the colonies, and extending the jurisdiction of the courts of admiralty here, beyond their ancient limits, should be repealed.

We shall not attempt a minute detail of all the reasons which the wisdom of the Honourable House may suggest on this occasion, but would *humbly submit* the following particulars to their consideration.

That *money* is already become very scarce in these colonies, and is still decreasing by the necessary exportation of specie from the continent; for the discharge of our debts to British merchants; that an immensely heavy debt is yet due from the colonies for British manufactures; and that they are still heavily burthened with taxes to discharge the arrearages, due for aids granted by them in the late war; that the *balance of trade* will ever be much against the colonies, and in favour of Great Britain, whilst we consume her manufactures, the demand for which must ever increase in proportion to the number of inhabitants settled here, with the means of purchasing them: We, therefore, humbly conceive it to be *for the interest of Great Britain*

to

General Congress. Philadelphia, October 6, 1774.

To Paul Wentworth Esq. Dr. Benjamin Franklin;
William Bollen, Esq. Dr. Arthur Lee; Thomas
Lise Esq. Edmund Burk, Esq. and Charles
Garth, Esq. *

GENTLEMEN,

WE give you the strongest proof of our reliance on your zeal and attachment to the happiness of America, and the cause of liberty, when we commit the inclosed paper to your care. We desire you will deliver the petition into the hands of his Majesty, and after it has been presented, we wish it may be made public through the press, together with the list of grievances: And as we hope for great assistance from the spirit, virtue, and justice of the nation, it is our earnest desire that the most effectual care be taken, as early as possible, to furnish the trading cities and manufacturing towns, throughout the united kingdom, with our memorial to the people of Great Britain. We doubt not but your good sense and discernment will lead you to avail yourselves of every assistance that may be derived from the advice and friendship of all great and good men, who may incline to aid the cause of liberty and mankind. The gratitude of America expressed in the inclosed vote of thanks, we desire may be conveyed to the deserving objects of it, in a manner that you think will be most acceptable to them. It is proposed that another congress be held on the tenth of May next, at this place, but in the mean time we beg the favour of you, gentlemen, to transmit to the speakers of the several assemblies the earliest information of the most authentic accounts you can collect of all such conduct and designs of Ministry and Parliament, as it may concern America to know.

We are, &c.

By order and in behalf of the Congress,

HENRY MIDDLETON, President.

* I am informed that only the three last named gentlemen are colony agents.

to increase, rather than diminish those means, as the profits of all the trade of the colonies ultimately center there, *to pay for her manufactures*, as we are not allowed to purchase elsewhere, and by the consumption of which, all the advanced prices the British taxes oblige the makers and venders to set on them, we eventually contribute very largely to the revenue of the crown.

That from the nature of American business, the multiplicity of suits and papers, and in matters of small value, in a country where freeholds are so minutely divided, and property so frequently transferred, *a stamp duty must ever be very burthensome and unequal*. That it is extremely improbable that the Hon. House of Commons should at all times be thoroughly acquainted with our condition, and all facts requisite to a just and equal taxation of the Colonies,

It is also humbly submitted whether there be not a material distinction, *in reason and sound policy at least*, between the necessary exercise of parliamentary jurisdiction in *general acts* for the amendment of the common law, and the regulations of trade and commerce through the whole empire, and the exercise of that jurisdiction, by *imposing taxes on the Colonies*.

That the several *subordinate provincial legislatures* have been moulded into forms as near resembling that of the mother country, as by his Majesty's royal predecessors was thought convenient; and these legislatures seem to have been wisely and graciously established, that the subjects in the Colonies might under the *due administration* thereof enjoy the happy fruit of the British government, which in their present circumstances they cannot be so fully and clearly availed of any other way.

Under these forms of government, we, and our ancestors, have been born or settled, and have had our lives, liberties, and properties protected. The people here, as every where else, retain a great fondness for their old customs and usages; and we trust that his Majesty's service,

The following address to the people of Great Britain has already appeared in all the news-papers, yet it may not be improper to confront it here to the proceedings of the delegates in 1764.

To the People of Great Britain, from the Delegates, appointed by the several *English Colonies* of *New-Hampshire, &c. &c. &c.* to consider of their Grievances in *General Congress*, at *Philadelphia*, *Sept. 5, 1775.*

WHEN a nation, led to greatness by the hand of Liberty, and possessed of all the glory that heroism, munificence, and humanity can bestow, descends to the ungrateful task of forging chains for her Friends and Children, and instead of giving support to Freedom, turns advocate for Slavery and Oppression, there is reason to suspect she has either ceased to be virtuous, or been extremely negligent in the appointment of her rulers.

In almost every age, in repeated conflicts, in long and bloody wars, as well civil as foreign, against many and powerful nations, against the open assaults of enemies, and the more dangerous treachery of friends, have the inhabitants of your island, your great and glorious ancestors, maintained their independance, and transmitted the rights of men, and the blessings of liberty, to you their posterity.

Be not surpris'd therefore, that we, who are descended from the same common ancestors; that we, whose forefathers participated in all the rights, the liberties and the constitution, you so justly boast, and who have carefully conveyed the same fair inheritance to us, guarantied by the plighted faith of government, and the most solemn compacts with British Sovereigns, should refuse to surrender them to men, who found their claims on no principles of reason, and who prosecute them with a design, that by having our lives and property in their power, they may with the greater facility enslave you.

The cause of America is now the object of universal attention: It has at length become very serious. This un-

vice, and the interest of the nation, so far from being obstructed, have been vastly promoted by the provincial legislatures.

That we esteem our connections with, and dependance on Great Britain, as one of our greatest blessings, and apprehend the latter will appear to be sufficiently secure, when it is considered that the inhabitants in the Colonies have the most unbounded affection for his Majesty's person, family, and government, as well as for the mother country, and that their subordination to the parliament is universally acknowledged.

We therefore most humbly intreat, that the Hon. House would be pleased to hear our Council in support of this petition, and take our distressed and deplorable case into their consideration, and that the acts and clauses of acts so grievously restraining our trade and commerce, imposing duties and taxes on our property, and extending the jurisdiction of the court of Admiralty beyond its ancient limits, may be repealed; or that the Hon. House would otherwise relieve your petitioners, as in your great wisdom and goodness shall seem meet.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, shall ever pray.

New York, Nov. 1765.

The several legislatures in the Colonies were very diffident of the authority of the general congress assembled at New-York in 1765, though appointed by them; and the following proceedings, the tenor of which will serve for all the colonies represented at the congress, will shew that its powers were very cautiously limited.

Province of }
A. A. } In the House of Representatives, Nov. 1765.

MR. Speaker laid before the house the proceedings of the late general congress at New York, for the concurrence of this house if it saw fit; which being read, and considered,
Resolved,

happy country has not only been oppressed, but abused and misrepresented; and the duty we owe to ourselves and posterity, to your interest, and the general welfare of the British empire, leads us to address you on this very important subject.

Know then, That we consider ourselves, and do insist, that we are, and ought to be, as free as our fellow-subjects in Britain, and that no power on earth has a right to take our property from us without our consent.

That we claim all the benefits secured to the subject by the English constitution, and particularly that inestimable one of trial by jury.

That we hold it essential to English Liberty, that no man be condemned unheard, or punished for supposed offences, without having an opportunity of making his defence.

That we think the Legislature of Great Britain is not authorized by the constitution to establish a religion, fraught with sanguinary and impious tenets; or to erect an arbitrary form of government in any quarter of the globe. These rights, we, as well as you, deem sacred. And yet sacred as they are, they have with many others, been repeatedly and flagrantly violated.

Are not the Proprietors of the soil of Great Britain, Lords of their own property? can it be taken from them without their consent? will they yield it to the arbitrary disposal of any man, or number of men whatever?—You know they will not.

Why then are the Proprietors of the soil of America less Lords of their property, than you are of yours? or why should they submit it to the disposal of your Parliament, or any other Parliament, or Council in the world, not of their election? Can the intervention of the sea that divides us, cause disparity in rights? or can any reason be given, why English subjects, who live three thousand miles from the royal palace, should enjoy less liberty than those who are three hundred miles distant from it?

Reason

Resolved,

That this house do approve of, *and join in the resolves and petitions agreed to by the said general congress, and do appoint A B and C to be a Committee fully impowered to sign the same in behalf of this house.* But if the general petitions are forwarded, and *not signed by them, that then they cause the said petitions to be fairly transcribed, that they sign them in behalf of this house, and forward them to the Agent, who is hereby authorized, impowered, and earnestly requested to present the said petitions; to employ council, if need be, and use his utmost endeavours to obtain the favour and compassion of our most gracious Sovereign, and the parliament, towards his Majesty's distressed, but most faithful and dutiful subjects of his American colonies.*



The COMMITTEE'S LETTER to the AGENT. *

Dated A. A. Nov. 1765.

S I R,

BY order of the *general assembly* of this province, we forward to you the inclosed petitions to the best of Kings, and both Houses of Parliament. The *distressed* situation of the colonies must soon be followed by *their ruin*, if the Stamp and some other Acts, *relating to their trade*, which are the cause of our *calamity*, are not repealed. We therefore desire you will join the *agents* for the other colonies, for the same end appointed, to obtain the *pity and compassion* of our most gracious Sovereign, and the *Parliament*, towards his most faithful and dutiful subjects, *overburthened with debts contracted in the late war*, and by his Majesty's requisitions, are left *without money enough to pay the Stamp Duties one year*; and as these acts of Parliament now stand, we are *unable to find a remedy in our commerce abroad, or to support ourselves.* We think it will be proper, *and*

* Vide page 17.

Reason looks with indignation on such distinctions, and freemen can never perceive their propriety. And yet, however chimerical and unjust such discriminations are, the Parliament assert, that they have a right to bind us in all cases without exception, whether we consent or not; that they may take and use our property when and in what manner they please; that we are pensioners on their bounty for all that we possess, and can hold it no longer than they vouchsafe to permit. Such declarations we consider as heresies in English politics, and which can no more operate to deprive us of our property, than the interdicts of the Pope can divest Kings of sceptres, which the laws of the land and the voice of the people have placed in their hands.

At the conclusion of the late war—a war rendered glorious by the abilities and integrity of a * Minister, to whose efforts the British empire owes its safety and its fame: At the conclusion of this war, which was succeeded by an inglorious peace, formed under the auspices of a Minister of principles, and of a family unfriendly to the protestant cause, and inimical to liberty.—We say at this period, and under the influence of that man, a plan for enslaving your fellow-subjects in America was concerted, and has ever since been pertinaciously carrying into execution.

Prior to this æra you were content with drawing from us the wealth produced by our commerce. You restrained our trade in every way that could conduce to your emolument. You exercised unbounded sovereignty over the sea. You named the ports and nations to which alone our merchandize should be carried, and with whom alone we should trade; and though some of these restrictions were grievous, we nevertheless did not complain; we looked up to you as to our parent state to which we were bound by the strongest ties; and were happy in being instrumental to your prosperity and your grandeur.

We call upon you, yourselves, to witness our loyalty and attachment to the common interest of the whole empire. Did we not, in the last war, add all the strength of this vast continent to the force which repelled our common enemy? Did

* Why then do the American reprobate the first act—(the very first act) of the first year of the second reign of this minister?

and, if you approve of it, desire you will sign in our behalf the petitions of the same tenor, now lodged with, and under the care of, Richard Jackson, Esq. in order to be presented, and which we understand are *authoritatively* signed by more Committees * than any others, though we believe the greatest part, if not all the colonies on the continent, have forwarded petitions of this kind, with very little variation. We in this province have not been so boisterous and irregular as some others, not because we were insensible of our distresses, but because we thought the present method most likely to obtain relief.

We are, &c.

- * The General Congress, was composed of committees from several legislatures in the colonies.

The Gentleman who wrote the Letter from which the following Extracts are taken, will not, it is hoped, impute to the publisher a want of regard to private intercourses, as they have already passed through very many hands in America.

London, July 25, 1774.

THIS being the time of recess from public business, little is stirring in the political hemisphere; but to shew that your friends are not idle, a pamphlet * is inclosed, which is now circulating in this kingdom. The spirit which hath appeared in all America has given much uneasiness to our wicked ministers, and I conjecture they will, by their emissaries, try every expedient to bring about a disunion among you, when the Congress meets; therefore with much circumspection you should watch their motions and take all possible precaution to defeat their attempts. It appears to me the greatest stake that ever was

* The Appeal, &c. by Almon.

Did we not leave our native shores, and meet diseases and death, to promote the success of British arms in foreign climates? Did you not thank us for our zeal, and even reimburse us large sums of money, which, you confessed, we had advanced beyond our proportion, and far beyond our abilities? You did.

To what causes, then, are we to attribute the sudden change of treatment, and that system of slavery which was prepared for us at the restoration of the peace?

Before we had recovered from the distresses which ever attend war, an attempt was made to drain this country of all its money, by the oppressive Stamp Act. Paint, glass, and other commodities, which you would not permit us to purchase of other nations, were taxed; nay, although no wine is made in any country subject to the British state, you prohibited our procuring it of foreigners, without paying a tax, imposed by your parliament, on all we imported. These and many other impositions were laid upon us most unjustly and unconstitutionally, for the express purpose of raising a revenue—In order to silence complaint, it was, indeed, provided, that this revenue should be expended in America, for its protection and defence. These exactions, however, can receive no justification from a pretended necessity of protecting and defending us. They are lavishly squandered on court favourites, and ministerial dependants, generally avowed enemies to America, and employing themselves, by partial representations, to traduce and embroil the Colonies. For the necessary support of government here, we ever were and ever shall be ready to provide. And whenever the exigencies of the state may require it, we shall, as we have heretofore done, cheerfully contribute our full proportion of men and money. To enforce this unconstitutional and unjust scheme of taxation, every fence that the wisdom of our British ancestors had carefully erected against arbitrary power, has been violently thrown down in America, and the inestimable right of trial by jury taken away, in cases that touch both life and property. It was ordained, that whenever offences should be committed in the Colonies against particular Acts imposing various duties and restrictions

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upon

played for, no less than, *whether the Americans and their endless generations shall enjoy the common rights of mankind, or be worse than eastern slaves! The trial must now come to issue*, as open war is declared by the Boston port-bill, the other for altering your charter, and *licensing the soldiery and custom-house officers in murder and bloodshed, and above all by the Quebec bill.* These are the fruits of the seeds that have been sowing ever since 1764, therefore it will be necessary in forming *your bill of rights*, to specify every oppressive Act of Parliament since that period, and if this is done *with manly fierceness* I have reason to think that Lord Chatham and his friends will support it, though it is by no means prudent to rely over much on any support on this side the water; your chief confidence must be in your own virtue, unanimity, steadiness, and resolution. When your bill of rights is agreed on, the great consideration will be how to get it confirmed here. Was the *Congress composed of deputies regularly authorized by the assemblies of each province*, it might be proper to have it presented to the King by a deputy as an ambassador, from every colony, but as the *Congress will not be so constituted* your bill will not be received through such a medium, therefore suppose it must go through the old channel of the agents. But this I would have you rely on as a thing of absolute certainty, that *your bill or petition will not be in the least regarded, unless you can compel the merchants, manufacturers, and people of England to join you.* For this end, I know of no possible means, but to stop all commerce with this country, both exports and imports, which plan must be steadily and with the strictest faith adhered to till you have obtained redress. The want of American naval stores, particularly pitch, tar, and turpentine, would be most sensibly felt here immediately, and tobacco alone yields about 500,000 to the revenue, which deficiency it will puzzle the ministers in the extreme to make good. Your province will surely be wise enough not to enter into violent measures without the strictest concert with the other colonies, particularly Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas, because on them chiefly depend the whole effect of the American non-exportation. The Northern colonies have the European markets almost for their chief exports, but those colonies have hardly any but the English markets for their chief exports of tobacco and naval stores, therefore it will require your greatest address to get them to join in the non-exportation, as well as non-importation,

upon trade, the prosecutor might bring his action for the penalties in the Courts of Admiralty; by which means the subject lost the advantage of being tried by an honest uninfluenced jury of the vicinage, and was subjected to the sad necessity of being judged by a single man, a creature of the Crown, and according to the course of a law which exempts the prosecutor from the trouble of proving his accusation, and obliges the defendant either to evince his innocence or to suffer. To give this new judicatory the greater importance, and as, if with design to protect false accusers, it is further provided, that the Judge's certificate of there having been probable causes of seizure and prosecution, shall protect the prosecutor from actions at common law for recovery of damages.

By the course of our law, offences committed in such of the British dominions in which courts are established and justice duly and regularly administered, shall be there tried by a jury of the vicinage. There the offenders and the witnesses are known, and the degree of credibility to be given to their testimony, can be ascertained.

In all these Colonies, justice is regularly and impartially administered, and yet by the construction of some, and the directions of other Acts of Parliament, offenders are to be taken by force, together with all such persons as may be pointed out as witnesses, and carried to England, there to be tried in a distant land, by a jury of strangers, and subject to all the disadvantages that result from want of friends, want of witnesses, and want of money.

When the design * of raising a revenue from the duties imposed on the importation of tea into America, had in great measure been rendered abortive by our ceasing to import that commodity, a scheme was concerted by the Ministry with the East-India Company, and an act passed enabling and encouraging them to transport and vend it in the Colonies. Aware of the danger of giving success to this insidious manœuvre, and of permitting a precedent of taxation thus to be established among us, various methods were adopted to elude the stroke. The people of Boston, then ruled by a Governor, whom, as well as his predecessor,

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for,

* Lord Chatham's administration.

tion, for I am well convinced the latter without the former will not avail, nor indeed will they both do unless soon put into practice: A non-consumption association would indeed be an effectual guaranty of the other two, I see great difficulty in the way of the attainment. If you loose the present crisis, the new House of Commons will be moulded in a year's time to the ministerial mould, and General Carlton will have forwarded the plan of the Quebec bill, so that any resistance you can make then will be fruitless. Whereas if all the commerce is soon stopped, the intelligence will be known over the whole kingdom, in the winter when the manufacturer is needy, and we in the height of a general election, and then will be the best time that can be wished, for the people at large to convince the candidates to serve in Parliament of the necessity there is to repeal all the late wicked acts; and I think it more than probable, that in such an event, it would be made a stipulation with the candidates that they would use their utmost efforts to obtain a total repeal of all the oppressive acts that you complain of. You must make the merchants feel before they will stir for you, as their conduct lately sufficiently evinces. &c.

for, Sir Francis Bernard, all America considers as her enemy, were exceedingly embarrassed. The ships, which had arrived with the tea, were by his management prevented from returning.—The duties would have been paid; the cargoes landed and expoied to sale; a Governor's influence would have procured and protected many purchase.s. While the town was suspended by deliberations on this important subject, the tea was destroyed. Even supposing a trespass was thereby committed, and the Proprietors of the tea entitled to damages.—The Courts of Law were open, and Judges appointed by the Crown presided in them.—The East-India Company however did not think proper to commence any suits, nor did they even demand satisfaction either from individuals, or from the community in general. The Ministry, it seems officiously made the case their own, and the great council of the nation defended to intermeddle with a dispute about private property.—Divers papers, letters, and other unauthenticated *ex parte* evidence were laid before them; neither the person who destroyed the Tea, or the people of Boston, were called upon to answer the complaint. The Ministry incensed by being disappointed in a favourite scheme, were determined to recur from the little arts of finesse, to open force and unmanly violence. The port of Boston was blocked up by a fleet, and an army placed in the town. Their trade was to be suspended, and thousands reduced to the necessity of gaining subsistence from charity, till they should submit to pass under the yoke, and consent to become slaves, by confessing the omnipotence of Parliament, and acquiescing in whatever disposition they might think proper to make of their lives and property.

Let justice and humanity cease to be the boast of your nation! consult your history, examine your records of former transactions, nay turn to the annals of the many arbitrary states and kingdoms that surround you, and shew us a single instance of men being condemned to suffer for imputed crimes, unheard, unquestioned, and without even the specious formality of a trial; and that too by laws made expressly for the purpose, and which had no existence at the time of the fact committed. If it be difficult to reconcile these proceedings to the genius and temper

per of your laws and constitution, the task will become more arduous when we call upon our ministerial enemies to justify, not only condemning men untried, and by hearsay, but involving the innocent in one common punishment with the guilty, and for the act of thirty or forty, to bring poverty, distress, and calamity on thirty thousand souls, and those not your enemies, but your friends, brethren, and fellow-subjects,

It would be some consolation to us, if the catalogue of American oppression ended here. It gives us pain to be induced to the necessity of reminding you, that under the confidence reposed in the faith of government, pledged in a royal charter for a British Sovereign, the fore-fathers of the present inhabitants of the Massachusetts Bay left their former habitations, and established that great, flourishing, and loyal Colony. Without incurring or being charged with a forfeiture of their rights, without being heard, without being tried, without law, and without justice, by an Act of Parliament, their charter is destroyed, their liberties violated, their constitution and form of government changed: and all this upon no better pretence, than because in one of their towns a trespass was committed on some merchandize, said to belong to one of the Companies, and because the Ministry were of opinion, that such high political regulations were necessary to compel due subordination and obedience to their mandates.

Nor are these the only capital grievances under which we labour. We might tell of dissolute, weak and wicked Governors having been set over us; of Legislatures being suspended for asserting the rights of British subjects—of needy and ignorant dependents on great men, advanced to the seats of justice, and to other places of trust and importance;—of hard restrictions on commerce, and a great variety of lesser evils, the recollection of which is almost lost under the weight and pressure of greater and more poignant calamities.

Now mark the progression of the ministerial plan for enslaving us.

Well aware that such hardy attempts to take our property from us; to deprive us of that valuable right of trial

trial by jury; to seize our persons, and carry us for trial to Great Britain; to blockade our ports; to destroy our Charters, and change our forms of government, would occasion, and had already occasioned, great discontent in all the colonies, which might produce opposition to these measures: An act was passed to protect, indemnify, and screen from punishment such as might be guilty even of murder, in endeavouring to carry their oppressive edicts into execution: And by another Act the dominion of Canada is to be so extended, modelled, and governed, as that by being disunited from us, detached from our interests, by civil as well as religious prejudices, that by their numbers daily swelling with Catholic emigrants from Europe, and by their devotion to Administration so friendly to their religion, they might become formidable to us, and on occasion, be fit instruments in the hands of power, to reduce the ancient free Protestant Colonies to the same state of slavery with themselves.

This was evidently the object of the Act:—And in this view being extremely dangerous to our liberty and quiet, we cannot forbear complaining of it, as hostile to British America.—Superadded to these considerations, we cannot help deploring the unhappy condition to which it has reduced the many English settlers, who, encouraged by the Royal Proclamation, promising the enjoyment of all their rights, have purchased estates in that country.—They are now the subjects of an arbitrary government, deprived of trial by jury, and when imprisoned cannot claim the benefit of the habeas corpus act, that great bulwark and palladium of English liberty:—Nor can we suppress our astonishment, * that a British Parliament should ever consent to establish in that country a religion that has deluged your Island in blood, and dispersed impiety, bigotry, persecution, murder, and rebellion through every part of the world.

This being a true state of facts, let us beseech you to consider to what end they lead.

Admit

* Was the Roman Catholic religion unknown in the practice among the English colonies till this act passed? let Maryland---Virginia---Pennsylvania, &c. answer---its protection was the primary object of the charter and the proprietor of Maryland.

Admit that the Ministry, by the powers of Britain, and and the aid of our Roman Catholic neighbours, should be able to carry the point of taxation, and reduce us to a state of perfect humiliation and slavery. Such an enterprise would doubtless make some addition to your national debt, which already presses down your liberties, and fills you with Pensioners and Placemen:—We presume, also, that your commerce will somewhat be diminished. However, suppose you should prove victorious—in what condition will you then be? What advantages or what laurels will you reap from such a conquest?

May not a Ministry with the same armies enslave you—it may be said, you will cease to pay them—but remember the taxes from America, the wealth, and we may add, the men, and particularly the Roman Catholics of this vast continent will then be in the power of your enemies—nor will you have any reason to expect, that after making slaves of us, many among us should refuse to assist in reducing you to the same abject state.

Do not treat this as chimerical—Know that in less than half a century, the quit-rents reserved to the Crown, from the numberless grants of this vast continent, will pour large streams of wealth into the royal coffers, and if to this be added the power of taxing America at pleasure, the Crown will be rendered independant on you for supplies, and will possess more treasure than may be necessary to purchase the *remains of* Liberty in your Island.—In a word, take care you do not fall into the pit that is preparing for us.

We believe there is yet much virtue, much justice, and much public spirit in the English nation.—To that justice we now appeal. You have been told that we are seditious, impatient of government, and desirous of independancy. Be assured that these are not facts, but calumnies. Permit us to be as free as yourselves, and we shall ever esteem a union with you to be our greatest glory and our greatest happiness, we shall ever be ready to contribute all in our power to the welfare of the Empire—we shall consider your enemies as our enemies, and your interest as our own.

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But if you are determined that your Ministers shall wantonly sport with the rights of mankind—If neither the voice of justice, the dictates of the law, the principles of the constitution, or the suggestions of humanity can restrain your hands from shedding human blood in such an impious cause, we must then tell you, that we never will submit to be hewers of wood or drawers of water for any ministry or nation in the world.

Place us in the same situation that we were at the close of the last war, *and our former harmony will be restored.*

But lest the same supineness and the same inattention to our common interest, which you have for several years shown, should continue, we think it prudent to anticipate the consequences.

By the destruction of the trade of Boston, the Ministry have endeavoured to induce submission to their measures: The like fate may befall us all, we will endeavour therefore to live without trade, and recur for subsistence to the fertility and bounty of our native soil, which will afford us all the necessaries and some of the conveniences of life: We have suspended our importation from Great Britain and Ireland; and in less than a year's time, unless our grievances should be redressed, shall discontinue our exports to those kingdoms and the West-Indies.

It is with the utmost regret however, that we find ourselves compelled by the over-ruling principles of *self-preservation*, to adopt measures detrimental in their consequences to numbers of our fellow subjects in Great Britain and Ireland. But we hope, that the magnanimity and justice of the British Nation will furnish a Parliament of such wisdom, in dependance on public spirit, as may save the violated rights of the whole empire from the devices of wicked Ministers and evil counsellors, whether in or out of office, and thereby restore that harmony, friendship, and fraternal affection between all the inhabitants of his Majesty's kingdoms and territories, so ardently wished for by every true and honest American.

P I N I S.